

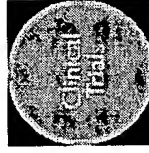
## APPENDIX J



[Home](#) [Site Map](#) [Search](#) [Glossary](#) [Contact Us](#) [Help](#) [Printer friendly](#)

Specific Cancers : [Pancreatic Cancer](#) : [Treating Pancreatic Cancer](#)

Menu for this topic



## The Stages of Pancreatic Cancer

This page is about the stages of pancreatic cancer. You can scroll down to read it all, or click on the links below to go straight to the information on

- [Why stage cancers](#)
- [The TNM stages](#)
- [The number stages \(stages 1 - 4\)](#)

### Why stage cancer?

The stage of a cancer tells the doctor how far it has spread. It is important because treatment is often decided according to the stage of a cancer. Your doctor may not be able to tell you the exact stage of your cancer until after your surgery. There are different ways of staging cancers. The two main ways are the TNM system and number systems. There is more about staging cancers in [About Cancer: Staging](#).

### TNM stages of pancreatic cancer

'TNM' stands for Tumour, Node, Metastasis. This system can describe the size of a primary tumour whether there are lymph nodes with



the size of a primary tumour, whether there are lymph nodes with cancer cells in them and whether the cancer has spread to a different part of the body. There are 5 stages of tumour size in the current TNM classification

- Tis (carcinoma in situ) is very early stage pancreatic cancer, which has not had a chance to spread. This is not at all common with this type of cancer.
- T1 means the size of the tumour in the pancreas is 2cm or less in any direction
- T2 means the tumour is more than 2cm across in any direction
- T3 means the cancer has started to grow into surrounding tissues around the pancreas, in the duodenum or the bile duct
- T4 means the cancer has grown further into the stomach, spleen, large bowel or nearby large blood vessels

N0 means there are no lymph nodes containing cancer. N1 means there are lymph nodes which contain cancer cells and so the cancer is more likely to have spread further than the pancreas itself. N1 is divided into

- pN1a - there is cancer in a single nearby lymph node
- pN1b - there is cancer in more than one lymph node

M0 means the cancer has not spread into distant organs such as the liver or lungs. M1 means the cancer has spread to other organs.

### **Number stages of cancer of the pancreas**

There are four stages in this system – stage 1 to 4.

#### **Stage 1**

This is the earliest stage of cancer. The cancer is completely inside the pancreas itself. In the TNM staging system, stage 1 cancers can be

bigger or smaller than 2cm, but there is no cancer in the lymph nodes or cancer spread. In TNM staging, this is equivalent to T1 or 2; N0; M0.

### **Stage 2**

The cancer has started to grow into nearby tissues around the pancreas. It may be in the duodenum or the bile duct. But there is no cancer inside the nearby lymph nodes. This means that, although the cancer has been growing locally, there is a chance that it may not have spread through the blood or lymph systems. In TNM staging, this is equivalent to T3; N0; M0.

### **Stage 3**

The cancer itself can be any size and may have grown into the tissues surrounding the pancreas. Cancer is also found in the nearby lymph nodes. So it may have spread into other body organs through the lymph system. In TNM staging, this is equivalent to T1, 2 or 3; N1; M0.

### **Stage 4**

This is divided into 4A and 4B. 4A means the cancer has grown into nearby organs such as the stomach, spleen, large bowel or nearby large blood vessels. There may or may not be cancer in the lymph nodes. In TNM staging, this is equivalent to T4; anyN; M0.

4B means the cancer has spread to other body organs such as the liver or lungs. Your doctor may call this advanced cancer. In TNM staging, this is equivalent to anyT; anyN; M1.

